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Environment and sustainable development

Letter dated 9 May 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of the Bucharest Declaration, adopted at the Summit on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Carpathian and Danube Region, which was held in Bucharest, Romania, on 30 April 2001 (see annex). The document reaffirms the importance of the commitments undertaken at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro, as well as the 10-year review and evaluation to be conducted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, September 2002).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 111 of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Sorin **Ducaru**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations

* A/56/50.

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Annex to the letter dated 9 May 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Romania to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Green Light for Europe

Summit on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Carpathian and Danube Region

(29 and 30 April 2001, Bucharest, Romania)

Declaration on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Carpathian and Danube Region

(Bucharest, 30 April 2001)

We, Heads of State and High Representatives of the States participating in the Summit on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Carpathian and Danube Region,[a]

Bearing in mind the Stockholm Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment of 1972 and the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development of 1992,

Reaffirming the importance of the implementation of the political and legal commitments undertaken by the international community following those and subsequent conferences, especially at the pan-European level,

Being aware that the ten-year review and evaluation of the Rio Declaration commitments and the implementation of Agenda 21 to be conducted at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002 will provide a momentous opportunity for further action to strengthen international cooperation towards coping with the challenges of sustainable development in the twenty-first century,

Being convinced that renewed efforts are required towards that goal on the part of all Carpathian and Danubian countries in a spirit of regional solidarity,

Upholding the principle of common, yet differentiated responsibility, to manage the environment and natural resources so as to promote sustainable development to the benefit of present and future generations,

Acknowledging that the Carpathian region is a natural treasure of great beauty and ecological value, a reservoir of biodiversity, the headwater of major rivers and Europe's largest area of virgin forest,

Acknowledging also the special economic and social importance of the Danube River and its tributaries as a major European river with multiple uses and functions, as well as its ecological significance and its value as a natural habitat for numerous wildlife species,

[a] See appendix.

Recognizing that a worldwide scientific assessment of biodiversity by the World Wide Fund for Nature identified the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube delta as two of the world's most important ecoregions with a representative selection of the world's most outstanding and distinctive biological resources,

Being aware of the fact that efforts to protect, maintain and sustainably manage the natural resources of the Carpathian Mountains and the Danube River basin cannot be achieved by one country alone and require regional cooperation,

Emphasizing that cooperation on environment and sustainable development will assist the efforts towards stability and peace in the region,

Appreciating the efforts that have been undertaken at international, regional, national and local levels to enhance cooperation and support for the maintenance and protection of the natural assets and resources,

Recognizing that the people of the Carpathian region and the Danube River basin have developed and maintained various traditions and practices that have helped provide the basis for sustainable development of the natural resources of the region,

Expressing appreciation to the United Nations and its specialized institutions, in particular the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the Economic Commission for Europe, and other international organizations for their support to the South-East European countries through concrete programmes and projects and also for their assistance in addressing the consequences of the Balkan conflicts on environment and human settlements,

Considering that capacity-building and institutional strengthening as well as specific activities in the field of education, public participation and environmental awareness are essential requirements for sustainable development in the region,

Declare their intention to encourage and support:

1 (a) International and regional cooperation with a view to maintaining and rehabilitating the natural assets and to improving the state of the environment in the Carpathian region and the Danube River basin;

1 (b) Regional efforts and concrete measures in a common quest for sustainable development;

1 (c) Regional bilateral, national and local initiatives that demonstrate the ability of humans to live in harmony with nature in the Carpathian and Danube region;

1 (d) Joint assessments of development policies and programmes ensuring the integration of environmental considerations in economic and social development to prevent harmful effects in a cost-effective way in order to enhance the impact of market-driven solutions;

1 (e) Bringing together in partnership entities from the private sector, government institutions, research or educational establishments and non-governmental organizations in a constructive dialogue on practical ways and means to achieve conservation of nature and sustainable development;

1 (f) Cooperation with and among stakeholders and public-private partnership in accordance with the principles of the Convention on Access to Information,

Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus, 1998);

1 (g) Regional cooperation with a view to achieving the objectives of relevant United Nations conventions, in particular the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity (Rio de Janeiro, 1992);

1 (h) Strengthening the implementation of multilateral and bilateral environmental agreements to prevent and reduce pollution, preserve biological diversity and avoid and mitigate environmental emergencies;

1 (i) Joint activities under the Regional Environmental Reconstruction Program (REReP) in South-Eastern Europe in the framework of the Stability Pact;

2 (a) The activities for developing new intergovernmental regional instruments for conservation and sustainable development in the Carpathian region, by paying special attention to the celebration of the International Year of Mountains in 2002 as well as to the Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Kyiv, 2003);

2 (b) New ways and means of integrated and participatory approaches to sustainable development in the Carpathian region by addressing the specific issues of industry, agriculture, forestry, rural development, cultural heritage, energy, mining and transport at a regional level in cooperation with national stakeholders, the private sector and international organizations, assessing the environmental impact of such activities, and designing common solutions in response to environmental challenges;

3 (a) The activities of the International Commission for the Protection of the Danube River (ICPDR), namely, the elaboration of a river basin management plan in accordance with the European Union-Water Framework Directive;

3 (b) The implementation of the Joint Action Programme (JAP) and the Common Platform (Guidelines for Development of National Policies and Actions for Pollution Reduction);

3 (c) Further cooperation on the Lower Danube Green Corridor to ensure proper protection and rehabilitation of flood plains, wetlands and natural forests in order to enhance the implementation of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar, 1971);

4 (a) The regional and national strategies for the conservation and protection of the environment and for sustainable development to be compatible with the European and international policies;

4 (b) Creation of a favourable climate for enhanced cooperation in technology transfer, environmental science and technology, in particular for the development and dissemination of innovative energy-efficient and environment-friendly technologies;

4 (c) Mobilization of financial resources for environment and sustainable development projects and programmes in the Carpathian and Danube region and the use of existing mechanisms for this purpose, in particular European Union funds and the Global Environment Facility (GEF);

4 (d) Involvement of the private sector in addressing environmental issues by facilitating access to information, financial resources, and expedient recourse to justice;

5. Highlighting the importance of improving substantially, within the existing framework, the cooperation in the Carpathian region and the Danube River basin as a significant contribution to the strengthening of the regional character of the "Environment for Europe" process;

6. The presentation of the present Declaration and early results on its implementation to the ten-year review of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be undertaken at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, in 2002.

Appendix

Heads of State and High Representatives of the States participating in the Summit on Environment and Sustainable Development in the Carpathian and Danube Region

Mr. Rexhep Meidani, President, Head of the Albanian Delegation

Mr. Zivko Radisic, President, Head of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Delegation

Mr. Petar Stoyanov, President, Head of the Bulgarian Delegation

Mr. Stipe Mesic, President, Head of the Croatian Delegation

Mr. Boris Trajkovski, President, Head of the Macedonian Delegation

Mr. Vladimir Voronin, President, Head of the Moldovan Delegation

Mr. Ion Iliescu, President, Head of the Romanian Delegation

Mr. Rudolf Schuster, President, Head of the Slovak Delegation

Mr. Leonid Kuchma, President, Head of the Ukrainian Delegation

Mr. Turi-Kovács Béla, Minister for the Protection of the Environment, Head of the Hungarian Delegation

Ms. Jolanta Szymanek-Deresz, Secretary of State, Chief of the Chancellery of the President, Head of the Polish Delegation

Mr. Vladimir Jovanovic, Assistant of the Federal Minister of Health and Social Policy, Head of the Yugoslav Delegation

Mr. Heinz Schreiber, Director-General, Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, Head of the Austrian Delegation

Mr. Jaromir Plisek, Ambassador to Bucharest, Head of the Czech Delegation